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BUILDUP OF LONG-DISTANCE COMMUNICATIONS IN YUGOSLAVIA

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BUILDUP OF LONG-DISTANCE COMMUNICATIONS IN YUGOSLAVIA

Summary

Yugoslavia is in the midst of an extensive program for improving its long-distance communications capability. The program, which emphasizes a substantial buildup in high-capacity, reliable transmission media, will, on its completion in 1965, signal the establishment of a modern telecommunications resource base that will be able to cope with the increasing domestic and international communications needs of the country.

I. Background

Before 1961 the expansion of the telecommunications system of Yugoslavia was keyed to a program of constructing open wireline facilities and intensively applying carrier frequency multiplex equipment on all new and existing wireline routes. Although this program effected some increase in the quantity of long-distance channels, it was incapable, because of economic and technical considerations, of providing large increments in channel capacity. To meet this need, Yugoslavia initiated a major new plan for modernizing and enlarging its long-distance telecommunications transmission base. This plan, which was to be executed during the years 1961-65, emphasized the installation of 4-tube coaxial cable lines, with a capacity of 1,920 telephone channels, on all mainline domestic routes having international connections and the installation of microwave radio relay lines, varying in capacity from 60 to 960 telephone channels, on all other main routes. In accordance with the plan, all new microwave routes were to be equipped with gear imported from Italy, whereas coaxial cable routes were to be equipped with domestically produced cable.* For the most part, multiplex equipment associated with both systems was to be imported from West Germany.

II. Current Status

Since the inception of the plan in 1961, the telecommunications system of Yugoslavia has undergone striking change. The key factor in

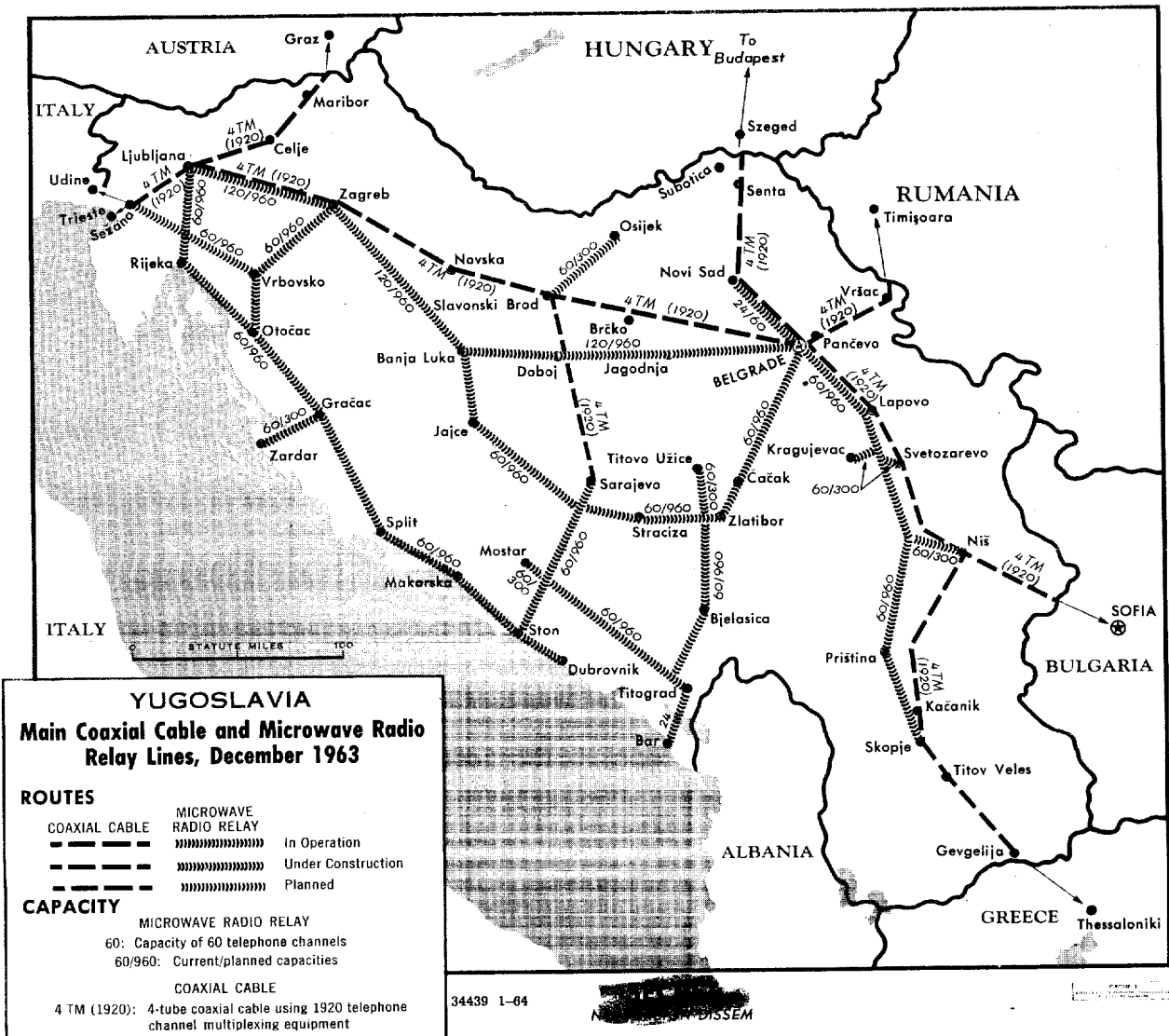
* Production of 4-tube coaxial cable in Yugoslavia began late in 1962 when a new department of the Fabrika Kablova Plant was put in operation. According to the licensing agreement with Siemens and Halske, the West German company that provided the equipment for this new department, Yugoslavia cannot export any of this cable without the permission of Siemens and Halske. Furthermore, permission to export such cable to any Bloc country is specifically denied.

this transformation has been rapid advances in constructing planned coaxial cable and microwave radio relay lines. As shown on the map, such facilities, installed separately or in parallel, are completed between Skopje in the southeast and Ljubljana in the northwest to form a main communications axis. Domestic and international extensions from this main axis are already under construction or in the final stages of planning. When completed in 1965, these new facilities not only will have a significant impact on domestic communications but also will enhance greatly the international communications posture of the country, inasmuch as they will afford connections to all contiguous areas except Albania.

This improvement in international communications is of singular importance because it reflects a close relationship between the development of these new facilities in Yugoslavia and those now completed or under construction in various countries of the Soviet Bloc. Coincident with developments in Yugoslavia, the USSR and the European Satellites, under the aegis of the Bloc-wide Organization for Cooperation Among Socialist Countries in the Fields of Post and Communications (OSS), have made considerable progress in installing comparable facilities so as to establish an intra-Bloc semiautomatic and eventually fully automatic telephone network.* When completed, this network will interconnect the capital cities of all European Communist countries with one another and with the capital cities of most of the remaining countries in Western Europe.

The role of Yugoslavia in the development and operation of this new network overshadows, by far, its seemingly unimportant status as an observer in the OSS mechanism. Because of its strategic geographic location, Yugoslavia has been designated as one of the five major transit countries in the network. As such, it will in effect function as a gateway communications center for intra-Bloc telephone traffic as well as for telephone traffic between the Bloc and various countries of Western Europe. This fact, coupled with its development of an over-all modern telecommunications transmission base, foreshadows the emergence of Yugoslavia in the not too distant future as one of the major communications centers in Europe.

* Completion of the semiautomatic network is expected in 1964, and the network will become fully automatic in 1975.



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